

24 June 1974

MEMORANDUM

MBFR Data Problems

Summary

*All is not beer and palatschincken for the US MBFR Delegation. A sense of frustration has set in as a result of lack of MBFR movement. Washington policymakers want no initiatives pending summit explorations. Meanwhile, Ambassador Resor and other members of the Delegation are critical of intelligence aspects.*

1. Pending outcome of the Moscow summit sessions, the MBFR negotiations in Vienna are essentially at an impasse, with the West still restating positions tabled last autumn. In hopes of some advancement in the East-West dialogue, the US Delegation in Vienna has been giving detailed attention to the subjects of force definitions, categorization, and numbers of men (often incorporated by the Delegation in the single term "data"). The Delegation's hope is that these topics can be discussed with the East in the last few informal sessions before the summer break and that the talks will lead to substantive advance. Washington has kept the negotiators in Vienna on a very short leash, however, precluding any swift immersion in data discussions with the East. The imminence of the summit has been enough justification for US policymakers to avoid major initiatives in Vienna in the past few weeks. Indeed, Vienna has had trouble getting any guidance, even negative. Most Delegation queries are answered by messages saying the subject, whatever it may be, is under study.

2. The situation has led to an increasing sense of frustration, particularly in the US Delegation which includes some ambitious and highly motivated men. Lacking permission to discuss data in detail even within the Ad Hoc (Allied) Group, the Delegation has focused much of its energy inward, going into the data issue to a depth usually left to analysts in Washington. This has not proved to be a harmless safety valve, however, because the uncertainties surrounding estimates of Warsaw Pact manpower have forestalled some of the lines of analysis and presentation the Delegation has chosen to pursue. This has deepened the frustrations and a super-critical attitude toward intelligence and its practitioners has developed. The situation is not helped by the fact that the intelligence community has been in the process of making one of its periodic updates in manpower estimates. (Rather frequent changes in order-of-battle holdings are inevitable as our data is refined, but changes naturally complicate the life of MBFR planners and negotiators.)

3. Ambassador Resor has been on the verge of cabling the DCI on more than one occasion recently to express displeasure at what he sees as an inability of the intelligence community to pull itself together<sup>25X1A6a</sup> in a professional fashion. [REDACTED] backed by agreed data from the intelligence community, has spent a good deal of time briefing the Delegation on the nature of the estimates and the process by which they are made.

4. We have done our best to satisfy the demands which the Delegation has laid on us, regardless of considerations of time, effort, and reasonableness of the requests. We are in the best position on Pact manpower estimates we have ever been in, thanks in part to timely acquisitions [REDACTED] We have a<sup>25X1X6</sup> long way to go, however, before we can narrow the remaining area of uncertainty. The greatest need now is to obtain information on overall aggregates of Pact military manpower by country and by service. We need these to bounce our detailed estimates against, to show that we have not made gross errors in assembling

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our figures. We have made our needs known to the

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5. The next crunch point in the data business will come when the Soviets surface some numbers. The Delegation is showing signs--because of its

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of how they compare with our figures. While we do not want to reject Soviet data out of hand, a properly skeptical and questioning attitude will be necessary in order to get from the Soviets the required back-up information with which to interpret their data. Our current concern is that in their

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There will be opportunity to review this question as a policy issue in future meetings of the MBFR Working Group and Verification Panel.

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Special Assistant to D/OSR  
for MBFR

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